

INSIGHTS IN YOUR INBOX

Thought-provoking findings from KDHRC’s analysis of original data with new reports shared bi-weekly. Today’s findings are from the VAYPS (Vaping Attitudes Youth Perspectives Survey) dataset.



THE BOTTOM LINE

Youth who vape more report being more heavily influenced by social media than those who do not vape.

QUICK FINDINGS

Using a sample of survey data collected in May 2020 from 1,100 youth, aged 13 to 17, across the United States, we found that students with higher self-reported vape usage also reported higher rates of being influenced by others on social media, including celebrities, and “influencers”, compared to students with lower self-reported vape usage. Specifically, when asked how much influence different groups had on their life:

- Never-users also reported feeling influenced by individuals on social media and celebrities/influencers at lower levels than other vape usage groups. Regular users reported feeling significantly higher influence from such people they see online.
- Overall, participants saw vapes most frequently through advertisements on social media and TV/streaming services. Over the past 30 days, 21% of all participants reported that they were exposed to vapes on social media and TV.
- Over a 30-day period, regular-users were more frequently exposed to vapes on billboards, social media ads, movies/TV shows, and other media than other youth.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The current youth generation has more access to social media than previous generations, and “screen influences” have taken on new meaning and weight.¹ Regular-users in this study reported that celebrities, influencers, and other individuals on social media have a greater influence on their life in comparison to other youth. Some celebrities and influencers on social media partner with brands and companies to promote products that encourage unhealthy behaviors – a tricky way to get around advertising bans.² Indeed, about 30% of participants shared that they have seen at least one vaping ad a week on social media over a 30-day period.

Participants report seeing vapes on movies and TV shows (25%) and celebrity/influencer social media posts (22%), and even these levels of exposure are associated with a greater risk of vaping uptake. It is imperative that parents monitor their teenagers’ screen time and stand ready to discuss vaping prevention. Additionally, advertisements focusing on the detrimental health effects and consequences of vaping should consider employing more celebrities and influencers to share the truth about vaping.

ABOUT KDHR RESEARCH & COMMUNICATION

KDH Research & Communication provides timely dissemination of new research in public health and social services fields. Our mission is to produce and disseminate creative, science-based programs that improve the health and well-being of the nation’s youth, family, and communities.

To learn more about the methodology behind the VAYPS project, please review the title page found [here](#). For more information about methodology or findings, contact our data analyst Andrew Simkus at asimkus@kdhrc.com. To read other findings, go to <https://www.kdhrc.com/news>.

REFERENCES

1. Rideout V, Robb MB. *Social media, social life: teens reveal their experiences*. San Francisco: Common Sense Media; 2018.
2. Daniel Jr ES, Crawford Jackson EC, Westerman DK. The Influence of Social Media Influencers: Understanding Online Vaping Communities and Parasocial Interaction through the Lens of Taylor’s Six-Segment Strategy Wheel. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*. 2019; 18(2): 96-109.
3. Núñez-Gómez P, Sánchez-Herrera J, Pintado-Blanco T. Children’s Engagement with Brands: From Social Media Consumption to Brand Preference and Loyalty. *Sustainability*. 2020; 12(22):9337. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12229337>

YOUTH AVERAGE RATING FOR PERCEPTION OF SCREEN INFLUENCES ACROSS PROFILE GROUPS

THE GRAPH BELOW SHOWS THE AVERAGE REPORTED RATINGS FROM AN 11-POINT SUBJECTIVE SCALE (0-10) FOR YOUTH PERCEPTION OF SCREEN INFLUENCE. GRAPH RESULTS ARE FROM TWO-SAMPLE T-TESTS CONDUCTED BETWEEN EACH PROFILE COMPARISON.

